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DEPARTMENT FOR EEB/ESC/TFS, S/CT AND INL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EFIN](#) [KTFN](#) [KCRM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ET](#)

SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA: RESPONSE ON ILLICIT CASH COURIERS

REF: STATE 152088

11. SUMMARY: Per reftel, post is providing updated information on illicit cash couriers and the actions Ethiopia is taking to prevent bulk cash smuggling. Ethiopia has laws in place prohibiting cash smuggling and is in the process of developing forms requiring that cash be declared upon entry. However, few specific actions to interdict cash smugglers appear to be underway. The National Bank of Ethiopia has agreed to the terms of reference for a U.S. Department of the Treasury technical assistance program designed to address anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing including bulk cash smuggling. END SUMMARY.

12. Answers to Specific Questions

--Status of host nation laws specifically criminalizing bulk cash smuggling and key elements of those laws:

Ethiopia's criminal code prohibits bulk cash smuggling. The jurisdiction to investigate such crimes falls under the Federal Police Crime and Forensic Investigation Main Department.

-- Cross-border reporting requirements for inbound/outbound movement of currency and monetary instruments:

According to U.S. Treasury Advisors, the Ethiopian Customs Authority is in the process of creating a cash declaration form in collaboration with the National Bank of Ethiopia. As of this writing, there is no requirement to list currency on the form filled out to enter or exit Ethiopia. Additionally, Ethiopia's porous borders pose a challenge in preventing cash smuggling, as reporting requirements are only effective at official entry/exit points.

--Host country actions to interdict potential cash smugglers or throw risk into the system:

Ethiopia is actively developing currency reporting requirements. There is clear jurisdiction within Ethiopian law enforcement entities to investigate such crimes.

--Status of investigations into bulk cash smuggling:

According to the head of the Investigation Department, the police arrest people with counterfeit Ethiopian Birr from time to time. No additional investigations were mentioned.

--Prosecutions under bulk cash smuggling laws:

None mentioned.

--How mission elements have engaged relevant partners to develop and execute a cash courier interdiction plan:

Both the establishment of a legal requirement for cross-border currency declarations and modifications of the existing form are priority items in the work plan for the U.S. Department of Treasury technical assistance program, as is raising awareness generally that

this method of money laundering is still among the most common of methods.

13. COMMENT: The recent signing of the terms of reference for the U.S. Department of Treasury technical assistance program after five months of negotiations indicates the Government of Ethiopia's openness to addressing vulnerabilities in terms of anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing. Treasury's program will include work to strengthen Ethiopia's defenses against bulk cash smuggling. END COMMENT.

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